

Message Text

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63

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 IO-14 NEA-11 OMB-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 /148 W

----- 077461

R 241100Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1829

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT MR LY TS

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT CONFIRMS GIRM INVITED JOIN PROPOSED LIBYA-
TUNISIA UNION

REF: NOUAKCHOTT 0050

SUMMARY. PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH CONFIRMS REPORT THAT GIRM
INVITED TO JOIN IN UNION WITH LIBYA AND TUNISIA, BUT
SAYS MAURITANIA IS STILL STUDYING OFFER. PRESIDENT'S UNSCHEDULED
FLYING VISIT TO ALGIERS JAN 23 PROBABLY INTENDED REASSURE
BOUMEDIENE OF GIRM'S RESERVED ATTITUDE TOWARD PROPOSED MERGER.
END SUMMARY.

1. DURING JAN 21 INTERVIEW WITH RESIDENT AFP CORRESPONDENT
(PUBLISHED IC GIRM PRESS 23 JAN), PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH *ONFIRMED
GIRM HAD RECEIVED INVITATION TO JOIN TUNISIAN-LIBYAN UNION.
PRESIDENT SAID INVITATION TENDERED BY BOURGUIBA DURING TELEPHONE
CONVERSATION "ON DAY LIBYAN-TUNISIAN UNION ANNOUNCED." OULD
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DADDAH WOULD COMMENT ONLY THAT GIRM "HAD NOT YET TAKEN A POSITION."

2. IT PROBABLE PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENT TOOK FONMIN MOUKNASS BY SURPRISE. FRENCH AMBASSADOR CONFIRMED SPANISH CHARGE'S REPORT (REFTEL) THAT, AS OF JAN 18, MOUKNASS WAS HOLDING LINE THAT GIRM HAD NOT RECEIVED INVITATION AND LOOKED WITH DISFAVOR UPON TUNISIAN-LIBYAN MERGER.

3. COMMENT: THE OPPOSITION OF ALGERIA AND MOROCCO, AND THE ALREADY SHAKY STATUS OF THE PROPOAL LEBANON SHOULD OFFICIALLY PRECLUDE ANY THOUGHT OF MAURITANIAN ADHERENCE TO TUNISIAN-LIBYAN MERGER. INVITATION TO JOIN-UP IS, HOWEVER, FLATTERING AND OULD DADDAH CHOSE TO MAKE IT PUBLIC WHICH WILL PLEASE TUNISIANS AND LIBYANS BUT NOT NECESSARY ENDANGER TIES WITH ALGERIA. ITWOULD FOLLOW, THEN, THAT OULD DADDAH'S UNSCHEDULED FLYING VISIT SO ALGIERS IS TO CONFIRHNT TO BOUMEDIENE THAT GIRM WILL REMAIN SILENT ON PROPOSED UNION WHILE "STUDYING" TUNISIA'S OFFER. S(SITUATION IS REMINISCENT OF EVENTS SURROUNDING GIWM'S RECENTSADHERENCE TO ARAB LEAGUE. PRIOR TO OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT, FONMIN MOUKNASS HELD TO LINE THAT SUCH MEMBERSHIP WOULD "VITIATE" GIRM FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVE OF BEING A BRIDGE BETWEEN ARAB WORLD AND BLACK AFRICA. OULD DADDAH'S SUBSEQUENT ANNOUNCEMENT OF LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP DEMONSTRATED PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL AND TIGHTLY-HELD CONTROL OVER GIRM FOREIGN POLICY. AGAIN, FORNMIN SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN KEPT IN DARK, THIS TIME OVER TUNISIAN INVITATION.) WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT COMPLICATIONS ENUMERATED ABOVE COUPLED WITH LONG-HELD GIRM FOREIGN POLICY PRECEPT THAT MAGHREBIAN UNITY SHOULD BE COMPLETE, NOT PART AL, MAKE VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE ANY POSITIVE RESPONSE TO TUNISIAN INVITATION.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FEDERATION, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 JAN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974NOUAKC00067
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: NOUAKCHOTT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740119/aaaaarbh.tel
Line Count: 91
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: NOUAKCHOTT 0050
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 JUN 2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <12 JUN 2002 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESIDENT CONFIRMS GIRM INVITED JOIN PROPOSED LIBYA- TUNISIA UNION
TAGS: PINT, MR, LY, TS, SP, SS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005